

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

July 16, 2003

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Commissioner Barnes, and seconded by Commissioner Niva to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2003 Commission meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT DISTRICTS (RTID) UPDATE

Charlie Howard, Director, Strategic Planning and Programming, briefed the Commission regarding the RTID budget and personnel issues. He discussed two different budget descriptions of RTID related allocations. Mr. Howard indicated that the Department would continue to work with the counties in a collaborative approach. Secretary MacDonald prepared a response letter to Gary Nelson, Snohomish County Council, regarding RTID staffing and funding appropriation. Commissioners requested that the letter be amended to include their support of the RTID.

It was moved by Commissioner Barnes, and seconded by Commissioner Maher to approve Secretary MacDonald's response letter as amended. The motion was approved unanimously.

COST ESTIMATING VALIDATION PROCESS (CEVP)

David Dye, Administrator, Urban Corridors, updated the Commission regarding current cost estimates and how risk and time impact project costs. He explained that the Department began a new process to improve upon its cost estimation procedures for complex transportation projects in January 2002. Mr. Dye distributed a handout that outlined different scenarios for the Alaskan Way Viaduct & Seawall Replacement Project; SR 509/I-5 Freight Corridor & Congestion Relief Project; I-405 Congestion relief & Bus Rapid Transit Project; the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project, and I-90 Two-Way Transit and HOV as revised from the 2002 Cost Estimating Validation Process (CEVP). He indicated that the Department is releasing the first CEVP for the I-90 Two-Way Transit and HOV Project, which is led by Sound Transit, as part of its Sound Move Program. The Department is committed to ongoing attention to cost evaluation as a means to better manage projects and to provide information to decision-makers and the public.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY REPORT

Secretary MacDonald invited Dan Mathis, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration to come forward. Mr. Mathis presented the Department with two Excellence in Highway Design Awards in the environmental and protection enhancement category for the First Creek Fish Passage and Indian Creek Stormwater projects.

The contractor on the First Creek Fish Passage Project also won an award for their innovative design. The City of Olympia, working in concert with the Department, won an award for the Indian Creek Stormwater facility.

John Conrad, Assistant Secretary, Engineering and Regional Operations, provided an update on the Nickel Funded projects. He outlined advertised and ready to go projects by July 1, 2003 that have been awarded to contractors, and projects that are still waiting for bids. He discussed various projects that are advertised and the tremendous efforts that have been made in getting the projects out to bid. Secretary MacDonald commented regarding the time invested and the permitting challenges on bridge projects such as the Hood Canal and Tacoma Narrows. He also commented briefly regarding the milestones that have been accomplished on the two project bridge projects.

SALT PILOT PROJECT

Rico Baroga, Maintenance Program Delivery Manager, briefed the Commission regarding the use of salt (sodium Chloride) for the control of snow and ice on highways. The Department discontinued the use of salt in the late 1980s in favor of liquid, corrosion-inhibited anti-icing chemicals. The intent of this project is to re-evaluate salt use on highways. Mr. Baroga distributed a draft evaluation report of the corrosion specification and related laboratory testing that outlines the cost, service and performance using different levels of tools for de-icing highways. Levels of service for snow and ice control were compared between salted and corrosion-inhibited sections of highway. In conclusion the draft findings indicate that the use of corrosion-inhibited chemicals is not achieving the specified levels of corrosion reduction and appear to be more aggressive on aluminum than salt. A final report will be provided to the Commission at a later date.

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD

Paul W. Locke, citizen, expressed his concerns with the increasing cost of projects.

SPOKANE NORTH/SOUTH FREEWAY UPDATE

Jerry Lenzi, Regional Administrator, Eastern Region, briefed the Commission regarding the status of the US 395 North Spokane Corridor Project. The highway project is 10.5 miles that will connect I-90 at milepost 283.58 to US 395 at milepost 167.86, and will provide a useable highway from Francis Avenue to Wandermere. As well the implementation of the Nickel Package provides funding for major segments of the North Spokane Corridor over the next 10 years.

WSDOT SAFETY OVERSIGHT OF TACOMA LINK

This agenda item was deferred to the August 20 & 21, 2003 meeting.

COAST GUARD SECURITY RULES STATUS

Mike Thorne, Chief Executive Officer, Washington State Ferries (WSF), introduced Scott Davis, Safety Systems Manager, WSF, and Gary Baldwin, Director, Human Resources,

WSF. Mr. Davis briefed the Commission regarding the Coast Guard's interim final security rules. These rules implement regulations of the Maritime Transportation Security Act effective November 2002. WSF has taken a number of actions to position itself to effectively and efficiently address the nature of these new regulations. Issues of significance are that passengers and vehicles will require some level of screening and an estimation of costs to implement these rules will need to be developed. WSF has formed a compliance team to analyze the regulations and work with the Coast Guard to perform the vessel and terminal assessments and draft vessel and terminal security plans. A Policy Committee has been created to formulate the corporate strategy, and the already in place Security Committee will resolve conflicts and establish a mutually acceptable approach to satisfy the requirements of the implementation of the regulations. WSF is working closely with the Coast Guard to clarify these new rules in order to prepare a plan. The Commission will be briefed as information becomes available.

PERSONNEL SYSTEM REFORM ACT (PSRA)

Richard Ybarra, Assistant Secretary, Finance and Administration, and Kermit Wooden, Director, Office of Human Resources, briefed the Commission regarding the Department's efforts relating to the development and implementation of the Personnel System Reform Act (PSRA). The civil service reform and collective bargaining legislation that passed in 2002 will bring changes to civil service reform, collective bargaining, competitive contracting and the Human Resource Management System (HRMS) with an implementation by July 2005. The Department is currently engaged in reviewing processes that will require policy, procedure, cultural and system changes. The Department of Personnel has the lead in the development and implementation of the civil services and reforms and new management systems. Mr. Ybarra outlined issues surrounding competitive contracting out of government services or activities. Secretary MacDonald stated that this is a complicated process and the Department is taking a close look at out sourcing versus in-house capabilities in order to determine which process works best to meet the Department's needs.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Kargianis reported that he attended the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Project Oversight Committee meeting. He also continues his involvement in meetings related to the improvement of the I-5 Corridor.

Chair Davis requested that the Department look into the implications of transportation modes in Washington State due to the 2010 Winter Olympics that will be held in Vancouver, Canada.

Chair Davis provided an update on the selection process of the Commission Administrator position.

Commissioner Barnes stated that he had nothing to report.

Commissioner Maher reported that she attended a regional economic development meeting and the Highway 12 ribbon cutting.

Commissioner Marr reported that he attended the Tribal Economic Development Conference in Spokane. He stated that he is working with Department staff looking at transit benchmarks.

Commissioner Niva reported that she attended the Arlington Fly-In and the Puget Sound Passenger Ferry Coalition Conference.

Chair Davis talked about regional transportation issues and their decision making process regarding two major corridors. He also discussed Sound Transit's federal funding contract. Secretary MacDonald commented regarding congestion management and the part that Sound Transit plays in that.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m., on July 16, 2003.